account' payment @ Rs. 528/- per metric tonne towards royalty on crude oil was made. This 'on account' rate of royalty has been increased to Rs. 578/- per metric tonne with effect from 1.4.1996. These provisional rates are subject to adjustment on notification of final rate of royalty to be notified on receipt of audited figures of cost of production of crude oil from Comptroller & Auditor General. Government of Gujarat has requested to fix the final rate of royalty on crude oil for the block period 1993—96 and for the block period 1996—99.

(e) Royalty in respect of mineral oil (defined as including Petroleum & Natural Gas) is governed by the provisions of Oilfields (Regulation & Development) Act, 1948 and the Petroleum and Natural Gas Rules, 1959. C&AG has been requested to expedite the audit of the cost of production figures for notifying the final rate of royalty early.

दरभंगा (बिहार) में पेट्रोल पम्प और गैस एजेंसियां

1782. **श्री ईश दत्त यादव:** क्या **पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस** मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार वर्ष 1998-99 में दरभंगा (बिहार) में पेट्रोल पम्प और गैस एजेंसिया खोलने का विचार रखती है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है;

(ग) यदि नहीं, तो उसके क्या कारण हैं;

(घ) क्या सरकार बेनीपुर, दरभंगा (बिहार) में भी कोई गैस एजेंसी खोलने का विचार रखती है, यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है; और

(ङ) यदि नहीं, तो उसके क्या कारण हैं?

पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री संतोष कुमार गंगवार): (क) और (ख) जिला दरभंगा (बिहार) के लिए पिछली विपणन योजनाओं से लंबित स्थानों के अलावा 1996—98 की खुदरा बिक्री केन्द्र और एल पी जी विपणन योजना में निम्नलिखित एक खुदरा बिक्री केन्द्र डीलरशिप और दो एल पी जी डिस्ट्रीब्यूटरशिपों को शामिल कर लिया गया है:

खुदरा बिक्री केन्द्र	:	शंकर-रोहर चौक
एल पी जी	:	रड़ी
	:	जाले

(ग) प्रश्न नहीं उठता।

(घ) और (ङ) एल पी जी डिस्ट्रीब्यूटरशिपें विभिन्न स्थानों पर खोली जाती हैं, बशर्ते वह स्थान व्यवहार्यता और आर्थिक साध्यता मानकों को पूरा करता है। वर्तमान में जिला दरभंगा (बिहार) में बेनीपुर में एल पी जी डिस्ट्रीब्यूटरशिप स्थापित करने का कोई प्रस्ताव नहीं है। तथापि, बेनीपुर, जिला दरभंगा में एक खुदरा बिक्री केन्द्र खोला जा रहा है।

विदेशों में तेल-शोधन

1783. **श्री ईश दत्त यादव:** क्या **पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस** मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार विदेशों में तेल शोधन करने की किसी योजना पर विचार कर रही है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है; और

(ग) सरकार इस संबंध में कोई नीतिगत निर्णय लेकर इस योजना पर कब तक कार्य करना प्रारंभ कर देगी?

पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री संतोष कुमार गंगवार) (क) जी नहीं। वर्तमान में ऐसा कोई प्रस्ताव नहीं है।

(ख) और (ग) प्रश्न नहीं उठता।

Vasudevan committee on LPG Safety

1784. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had accepted the recommendations of Vasudevan Committee on LPG safety and national oil companies were asked to take necessary action in this regard;

(b) whether the Committee had recommended banning the use of contract labour in various operations, including

the repair work in LPG handling areas; and

(c) if so, how more than 30 contract labour were killed inside the Vizag Refinery during LPG handling on 14th September, 1997?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Committee had recommended banning of contract manpower in the LPG bottling plants including inspection of cylinders (empty and filled), evacuation and repair work as it would be difficult to ensure that such manpower is adequately trained and disciplined enough for the various operations in the LPG bottling plants.

(c) Contract labourers who died in HPCL Visakh Refinery fire accident were not involved in LPG handling activities. They were basically engaged for canteen job, black oil tank wagon loading job, security and electrical maintenance job, etc.

Import and marketing of LPG at Haldia

1785. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a joint venture agreement has been signed between PETRONAS and IOC to import and market LPG at Haldia in West Bengal.

(b) if so, the salient features of the joint venture agreement indicating equity participation, capacity of the LPG facility, project cost etc.; and

(c) the likely zero date for commencement of the project and the time by which the LPG facility is expected to be operational?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Indian Oil Corporation has signed joint venture agreement on 12.8.97 with M/s Petroliam Nasional Berhad (Petronas), Malaysia to form a J.V.C. to set up and operate LPG import facility at Haldia and to import and market LPG under the parallel marketing scheme in West Bengal and other adjoining areas. The JVC will offer atleast 50% of the import capacity through Haldia Import facility to IOC for meeting its LPG requirements. The JVC will have 50:50% equity participation between IOC and Patronas for setting up a 600 TMTPA capacity LPG import facility at Haldia at an estimated cost of Rs. 223 crores.

(c) The project is estimated to be completed in 24 months from the date of final Government clearance.

Drilling in Drishna-Godavari Basin

1786. SHRI DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether ONGC propose to take up drilling in Krishna-Godavari basin;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the expected oil and gas reserves in the region?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THJE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Drilling operation in Krishna-Godavari Basin is already going on. During the year 1998-99, ONGC plans to drill 26 exploratory wells in this Basin, 20 in onshore and 6 in offshore.

(c) As on 1.4.1997, the balance of recoverable reserves in the Krishna-Godavari Basin is approximately 73.23 MMT of oil and oil equivalent of gas including from Joint Venture operations.